

Message Text

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ACTION AGR-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-07 IO-10 COME-00

TRSE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

PRS-01 INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 /072 W

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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PASS AGRICULTURE - DEP ASST SEC BELL AND HUME, FAS

EO 11652 NA

TAGS EAGR ETRD CA US

SUBJ AGRICULTURE SECRETARY WHELAN VISIT TO WASHINGTON, APRIL 2

REF KRUSE/LEARY TELECON

1. AGATT HAS LEARNED FROM CANADA DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE THAT WHELAN PLANS TO FLY TO WASHINGTON MORNING OF APRIL 2 ON GOVERNMENT AIRCRAFT. HIS PARTY WILL INCLUDE NEW DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE DENIS HUDON, BURNS AND HENRY OF ITC, AND SHANNON OF EXTAFF.

2. AGRICULTURE AND EXTAFF SOURCES ALL AGREE THAT LIVESTOCK AND MEAT WILL BE HIGH ON AGENDA. RETIRING DEPUTY MINISTER WILLIAMS TOLD AGATT THAT "OTHER BORDER TRADE PROBLEMS" WILL ALSO BE DISCUSSED BUT ITC AND EXTAFF SOURCES DOWNPLAY LATTER ASPECT.

3. ALL SOURCES ARE VAGUE ON WHAT, IF ANY, PROPOSALS WHELAN WILL PUT FORWARD. IN RESPONSE TO ECON COUNSELOR'S QUESTION, SHANNON SAID "I'M AS CURIOUS AS YOU ARE. OUR DELEGATION WILL MEET WITH WHELAN THURSDAY AND I HOPE WE'LL LEARN WHAT HE HAS IN MIND". SHANNON ADDED THAT MEAT QUOTA

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ISSUE HAS BEEN SUBJECT OF "LONG AND DIFFICULT" DEBATE

WITHIN GOC AND THOSE WHO WANT TO SEE FORWARD MOVEMENT
THINK FACT THAT WHELAN NOW IS PREPARED TO VISIT
WASHINGTON MAY BE "A GOOD SIGN".

4. EMBASSY NOTES THAT DURING TREASURY SECRETARY SIMON'S
MEETING MARCH 12 WITH GOC MINISTERS, WHELAN SAID HE
WOULD FAVOR NORTH AMERICAN MARKET ARRANGEMENT WHICH
WOULD PROTECT CATTLE PRODUCERS IN BOTH CANADA AND U.S.
HE DID NOT SPELL OUT CONCEPT AND WE ARE NOT AWARE OF
ANY SERIOUS STUDY OF IT IN GOC, BUT CONCEIVABLY WHELAN
WILL ADVANCE SOME IDEAS IN WASHINGTON.

5. CATTLEMEN HAVE BEEN PRESSING WHELAN TO SETTLE THE
BORDER TRADE PROBLEM. HOWEVER, SOME OF THE SAME PEOPLE
APPLAUDED WHELAN'S ACTIONS LAST AUGUST. WITH THE GAP
BETWEEN U.S. AND CANADIAN BEEF PRICES HAVING NARROWED,
SOME CANADIANS BELIEVE TIMING IS IDEAL FOR QUOTA REMOVAL
BY BOTH SIDES. THIS, HOWEVER, OVERLOOKS IMPOSITION BY
U.S. OF WHAT WE UNDERSTAND COULD BE COMPARABLE QUOTA
I.E. 17 MILLION LBS. UNDER MEAT IMPORT ACT.

6. WHELAN IS SURELY AWARE OF THIS. WE CANNOT HELP BUT
SPECULATE THAT THIS SUDDENLY RENEWED CANADIAN INTEREST
MAY RESULT IN NOTHING MORE THAN A CHARADE. WHELAN COULD
MAKE POLITICAL HAY OUT OF FACT THAT U.S. OFFER TO
REMOVE QUOTAS SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH CANADIAN REMOVAL WAS
A HOLLOW GESTURE AS EVIDENCED BY THE NEW QUOTA.

7. FOLLOWING DRAFTING OF ABOVE, NUTT (DIRECTOR GENERAL,
EXTAFF WESTERN HEMISPHERE BUREAU), IN RESPONSE TO
AMBASSADOR'S REQUEST FOR SPECIFIC INDICATION OF WHAT
WHELAN WANTS TO DISCUSS, TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT MOST HE
COULD SAY WAS WHELAN WOULD DISCUSS "CATTLE AND BEEF
PROBLEM AD REFERENDUM." PHRASEOLOGY SUGGESTS THAT
FOCUS WILL BE ON MEAT QUOTAS AND THAT WHELAN COULD BE
PUTTING FORWARD PROPOSALS FOR NEGOTIATION.
PORTER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK, TRADE AGREEMENTS, NEGOTIATIONS, MINISTERIAL VISITS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MEATS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975OTTAWA01144
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750108-0023
From: OTTAWA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975039/aaaaaigc.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AGR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 MAY 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <07 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AGRICULTURE SECRETARY WHELAN VISIT TO WASHINGTON, APRIL 2
TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, CA, US, (WHELAN, EUGENE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006